567 The only slaves who have remained faithful to their masters or, more exactly, who have preferred to remain in Mossi territory after their emancipation, are nearly all Gourounsi.

The Gourounsi Captives

567 727 648 Sonrhaï [Songhai] forces led by Alpha Haïnon, Gazeré, and Babato used to raid Gourounsi country. They reduced a large number of Gourounsi to slavery, immediately making soldiers of the more enterprising among them to fight against their own people and selling or exchanging the rest for horses. Mossi country has always had a large supply of horses, so the Mossi used to go to Léo [439] to trade their horses for slaves or simply to trade their slaves to the Sonrhaï for cowries.

567 648 The Sonrhaï chiefs maintained good relations with the emperor of the Mossi, Naba Sanum. That is why they spared the Gourounsi village chiefs who had taken refuge with the Mogho Naba.

Boukary-koutou, the future Naba Wobgo, enjoyed the [87] regard and friendship of the Sonrhaï since he aided them in their wars against the Gourounsi in exchange for an ample share of the booty and slaves. We have shown that the large number of Gourounsi whom he brought with him to Ouagadougou contributed mightily to his being named emperor of the Mossi.

567 651 During the reigns of Naba Koutou, Sanum, and Wobgo, there were special slave markets attached to the regular markets at Ouagadougou and other large centers. A fee of 1,000 cowries was collected for the benefit of the naba for each captive sold, regardless of sex.

567 302 787 When owners desired to sell a slave, they first shaved his head, and it was only after the hair had begun to grow again that he was taken to market. The cutting of the hair derives from a superstition among the Mossi.

Depending on where the hair starts to grow, whether well back on the head, at the forehead, or near the ears, the interpretation varies as to how the slave is to be regarded: as a dangerous being; as a lucky or unlucky influence on the family owning him.

We shall not now go into details since such beliefs will be discussed in a special section.

631 new naba mounts his horse and goes off with the minister who has jurisdiction over him. The minister offers him some zom kom (water with flour in it) and then welcomes him into his courtyard where he is offered a canari of dam (beer) and gouré (kola nuts). He is then escorted back to the home of his gangsoba by a goodly throng of drummers, horsemen, etc.

631 All the defeated candidates are required to shave their heads
302 at once and to make a formal act of submission to the new naba as soon as he has returned to the home of his gangsoba (host). It should be added that the candidates allow their hair to grow from the day of the death of the naba to the day on which his successor is appointed.

631 The new appointee must offer dam, saghbo, and cowries to the
431 nayiridamba. He also offers dam, kola nuts, and cowries to the drummers.

631 On the following day he accompanies the minister to the home of the Mogho Naba. During the monarch's second audience (beg sonré),
644 the minister calls him to salute the Mogho Naba. The new naba goes forward to the tomboko, cries out three times (cries of joy), and then performs the kantissé (the Mossi salute). Thereupon, the Ouidi Naba says to the Mogho Naba: "The chief whom you deigned to honor yesterday wishes to express his gratitude." The Mogho Naba responds to the salute and then, for the first time, offers him a canari of dam.

The new naba then calls upon the ministers and other important personages (Ouidi Naba, Larrhallé Naba, Gounga Naba, [144] Poé Naba, Kamsoro Naba, Samandé Naba, the imam, Daporé Naba, and the next day the Zusoaba).

Seven days later the Mogho Naba gives him a robe, a pougla (red fez), a nagpouré (cushion), and néoda (slippers).

The new naba removes his old ragged clothes (I use the description advisedly, since custom forbids him to change his clothes until he has received those given by the Mogho Naba). He gives the discarded garments to a relative, dresses in the robe from the Mogho Naba, puts on the pougla (fez), and becomes a true naba.

631 A few days later he asks permission to return to his own lands. Many court representatives (nayirdamba) accompany him. It is the

644 The sogoné may not wear trousers. He wears a type of
357 drawers called benda. All the nanamsé (plural of naba) have
292 followed the example of Naba Warga, and nowadays the most insignificant kombéré has at least a dozen sogoné.

[161]

The Napogré. General Conditions. Number of Wives of the Emperor Today. Ornaments.

644 Depending on whether the napagha is destined for the chief
595 himself or for one of his brothers or sons, the instruction of the napogré are given either in the quarters of the pugtiéma (first wife of the naba) or at the home of one of the old nabissi.

644 Water is heated and in it is put a bit of karite butter and other
595 ingredients. After the girl's head, armpits, and public hair have
302 been shaved by some old women, the pugtiéma or the old man dips a hand into the water, utters certain cabalistic words, and gives the names of all the chiefs who have succeeded each other up to the father of the current ruler.

644 The water is then given to the old women who bathe the
595 young napagha. It is at this time that she is instructed in the duties and obligations of the napogré, what she may do and what she should avoid.

[301] The new wife is then adorned with bracelets, kouaba (plural of kobré), and with rouamba [ankle rings], or with only bracelets. The chief may marry her at once or, depending on the circumstances, send her to the man for whom she is destined.

[684] The napagha must never have relations with any man other than her husband as long as she lives. Formerly she was pitilessly killed if she broke this rule. [162]

[302 As we have just seen, the napagha has no hair, and this is
301] the primary distinctive mark. Also, she wears bracelets on her wrists, sometimes even on her arms and some on her ankles (this is done mostly by favorites). Finally some wear kouaba, ornaments most often worn by old women.

The number of wives or napagha varies according to the importance of the naba and especially according to the desires of naba. According to the 1926 census, the present Mogho Naba had thirty-seven wives.

843 pregnancy in a woman. It is also known that the woman will give birth in nine months, but since it is impossible to be sure of the date of delivery, the pregnant woman is watched over constantly and is under the surveillance of the old women. In a general way, nature is allowed to take its course, but some people prefer to consult the soothsayers and the priests and to give alms and sacrifices to avoid a miscarriage. [781 782]

During pregnancy, women are forbidden to eat honey and, in general, any sweet foods.

Seguene-vando (from seguene, "to wear a skirt," and vando, "leaves, branches"). A few months after the cessation of menstruation, the pregnant woman is sent into the kim-dogo (hut of the kimsé, manes of the ancestors) at the home of the family elder. There she is completely disrobed, and branches are tied around her loins.

844 Delivery. Delivery takes place in the woman's own hut. There is no special preparation. [190] Old women who have had much practice help the mother while others heat water in which to cleanse the newborn child of all impurities.

No one except the old women is present during the delivery. [842] Women who have not yet borne children are sent away, and for good reason since the sight of the birth process might make them sterile.

Finally, if the afterbirth does not come out at the time of birth or soon after, there are certain special measures taken to hasten its emergence.

846 Three or four days after the delivery, depending on whether the child is a boy or a girl, the mother, who has so far remained indoors, goes out for the first time.

She carries a sickle to ward off ghosts and other evil spirits.

The new mother's co-wives and relatives bring her safandé (soap), kamé (karite butter), and kalgo (soumbala); others give her cowries. The father has a sheep or rooster killed and a millet cake prepared.

The woman who acted as midwife is sent a ball of sagbo (millet mush) and a chicken leg. The heads of the mother and child are partially shaved, and there is nothing else to do but to choose a name for the child. [191] [307]

553 Choice of a name. Among the Mossi, a child's personal name depends on circumstances which preceded the birth or on an important

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Mossi Girl.

From the Mission of the
White Fathers at Ouagadougou.

582 Marriage is exogamous, that is, relatives do not marry if their
564 kinship is known. There are no sharply defined caste lines. The Mossi marry Yarsé Malinké, Bousanse, and Gourounsi, but cannot marry Peul nor Haoussa. A Mossi who does not belong to a caste may choose his wife among Mossi who do belong to one. The latter do not intermarry freely; iron workers cannot marry from among the drummers.

584 But to go back to our story. The girl has grown. The suitor has already made numerous gifts. In short, the time has come to proceed with the wedding. The girl's father /31/ summons the betrothed and tells him: "Come and see me on such-and-such a day with a chicken." The suitor joyfully returns to his village and tells the elders that he was told to bring a chicken. On the day set, the suitor takes the bird to the girl's family, accompanied by his friends. He hands over the chicken, and everyone goes to the home of the head of the family, or, in his absence, to a village elder. The father states before all present that he wishes to give his daughter to So-and-So. Congratulations are exchanged, and everyone goes home. Now the festivities must be arranged, the relatives and friends must be notified, and the millet beer must be brewed. Meanwhile, the relatives and friends who have heard the good news come to greet the bridegroom and bring him fifty or a hundred cowries to help him meet the expenses of the festivities.

When everything is ready, the bridegroom takes 500 cowries and a rooster to the girl's father and 500 cowries to the elder in whose household the bride shall live until her wedding day. The girl's relatives have prepared dinner, while the bridegroom provides the
[302] drink. A relative of the groom shaves the bride's forehead in a circle, and she retires to the inner courtyard where her father's wives wash her thoroughly and tie a cotton cord around her waist. She dons a white garment and goes to offer a gourd of beer to her betrothed who has remained outside with his friends. Everyone thanks the girl's parents and then they all leave. On the day after next, the groom
[431] sends his friends to greet the family of his betrothed with a basket of millet flour, four kalro pellets, and salt, which are all distributed among the village people. These festivities, with their attendant ceremonies, come closest to a formal betrothal.

585 The girl, however, remains with the head of the family or with the elder who takes his place! When all these preliminary ceremonies are over, the groom sends daily for his bride. Once the trousseau has

585 been gathered together in a basket — clothes varying in number with the family's wealth, gourds, a pot for the sauce, a wooden spoon to stir the millet mush — the father tells the groom's messenger that the wedding date has been set for a certain day, nearly always on a Friday, sometimes Thursday. For the second time, the groom prepares the festivities and again the food and the drink. In the evening, his friends go out to meet the bride who is accompanied by her family. When nearing the village, they all let loose merry cries, "you, you", the bride pretends to run away, and the young men run after her and bear her on their shoulders to the head of the groom's family or to one of his uncles. And the party begins. The men eat millet mush [262] and a chicken; the women, millet mush and a guinea hen. They all drink beer, dance, and sing.

[302] On the following morning, the groom's relatives shave the bride's head, and that of her husband if she is his first wife, because their way of life has changed: the young man has become the master of a hut, and the young girl a wife. In the evening, the friends and relatives of the new husband go to the bride's village bearing in this order: a sheep killed at the husband's house, jars of beer, and finally the sarabo /millet mush/. The bride's relatives follow in complete silence /32/ and without greeting anybody. When they arrive at the home of the bride's family, the bearer of the sheep and the women who carry the millet beer and sarabo go into the inner courtyard and put down their loads; then they come out and dance, while the in-laws have the food transferred to other containers. The jars are returned to the bearers, who are driven away with blows by millet stalks and a sprinkling of water mixed with ashes.

All the while, the bride stays in the soukala of the elder, watched closely by his first wife. She remains shut in for several days, until the elder finally decides to send her to her husband. His wife prepares millet mush, sauce, and meat, and brings a jug of beer. The old women assemble and accompany the bride to the home of her husband. He returns the courtesy to the elder on the following day. Henceforth, they are married at long last.

[431] If the new husband is prosperous, he goes to thank his in-laws a few days after the festivities. In leather pouches sewn all around, he offers 1, 300 cowries to his father-in-law and 1, 400 to his mother-in-law. If he can, he also offers beer, two chickens, and a sheep. These last gifts are less essential, but if he fails to offer the cowries, the in-laws may seize his wife's children and keep them until the thank-you gifts have been received.

852 When they go into the bush, either to cut down straw or for any other reason, they sing invocations to the spirits of the paths and of the trees in order to propitiate them, to draw their blessing, and to avert illness. They chase everyone in their path, approach the villages, and, if they can, seize a few chickens, goats, or sheep as an extra tidbit. This is the custom, and they even steal the animals of their relatives in this fashion. At night they come up near the huts and beat everyone they meet; they take everything they can find, and no one would think of resisting them. /43/ In any case, during that time, people take good care of their children and send them plenty of food. To have a child undergoing circumcision is a burden to a family.

852 563 869 When the circumcised group consists largely of Moslems, Yarsé or Peul, the one in charge of the circumcision assembles them during rest periods, in the evening, or sometimes in the middle of the night, in order to instruct them. There does not seem to be any esoteric doctrine, and the instructions deal with the glorification of ancestors who were also circumcised there. Only those who are circumcised can enter heaven and have many children; those who are not will taste no happiness in the other life and will remain sterile. The group is also taught that God sits under a black tree on a sheep skin, that he eats from a dish and drinks from a bottle. It is all very childish. They are also told that they must not disclose to anyone, under penalty of death or at least of serious illness, what they have seen and learned during the circumcision period. This is to prevent them from revealing the robberies committed during that time and from discouraging those who should like to undergo the operation; for although it is tempting to eat well, to play a great deal, and especially to wear beautiful clothes, it is also unpleasant to be lashed with willows at the slightest slip, or for not dancing well, for quarreling with or insulting someone, for speaking Mossi, for being slow to go to work.

852 Occasionally, at circumcision time, two sticks are found on the path near the market. They were placed there on purpose, and if one looks to the right and left, he will see two children, all covered with dust and wearing dirty breechcloths. They are newly circumcised boys who are begging, and passersby drop a few cowries to the ground.

852 302 All these ceremonies are soon to end. The clothes are ready, and the children are getting tired and restive. The one in charge of the circumcision decides that the boys are to be shaved, that is, that the circumcision period will end in two weeks. The hair of the circumcised boys is not shaved off completely: strips of hair alternate with

852 shaved strips on top of the head, while the sides are shaved similarly
[302] in semi-circular strips. On the seventh day, people who were previously circumcised bring chickens to sacrifice to the spirits of the paths so that all will go well, but the newly circumcised take no part in the proceedings. The children wash, oil themselves, and put on their
852 beautiful clothes. Everything is brand new, the breechcloth, the
292 trousers, the shirt, the blanket, and the headgear. The belt is adorned
301 with a knife in a leather sheath and with a needle case which has at the end a tuft of leather strips with cowries attached to them. They
[776] hold a cow's tail, also adorned with cowries, to drive off the scheuyan spirits who dislike little rascals and people who dress too well. Both wrists are adorned with copper bracelets. Needless to say, this flashy new outfit with its cowries that clang like bells lures the eye and bewitches the young boys, who decide to be circumcised at the first opportunity so they too may eat well and wear beautiful clothes.

852 /44/ The circumcised boys continue to walk bent over, leaning on
[48] their sticks, but their crude staff is replaced with two sticks decorated with burnt designs and tied together. They no longer wear a tail. They go to greet the chiefs, and they thank those who have given them gifts. They walk to the sound of the large drum, since the bindré is forbidden at circumcision ceremonies, and sing plaintive chants to the spirits. They parade in the marketplace and display their clothes in
[535] the villages. They dance before the chiefs, and their dances are very graceful indeed. They dance in unison to the beat of the drum, making the same gestures all together or two by two, varying the figures in accordance with the beat. After seven days the festivities are over, and they all return to their families and take up everyday life as though nothing had happened.

We shall now study this everyday life.

/45/ BOOK III. DAILY WORK AND TRADES

Chapter 1. Occupations of a Mossi

221 The Mossi are essentially cultivators, and it may be said that no
241 Mossi who works at a trade will fail to cultivate his fields when the

777 may hold in store. Wednesday is unreservedly bad, and you must not start a job or leave for a trip on that day. Thursday and Friday are propitious to weddings, especially Friday. On Saturday the sorcerers take the day off and hold no consultations. In addition, every individual has his own lucky day and his unlucky day, which he must know and bear in mind.

778 787 823 Some stones are said to have fallen from heaven. On the day when they fall, the village chief immediately covers all the jars in his hut which contain charms. If he knocks one down in his haste, he will die within the year. These stones are held sacred. Those who can lift them /100/ have nothing to fear, but those who cannot are soon to die. People may also interrogate such a stone, whose reply is considered favorable if they manage to lift it, unfavorable if they cannot [788] do so. Passersby toss millet stalks onto the stone, or twigs cut along the way, or sometimes cowries, to procure success in their endeavors.

821 787 Comets are omens of war or of the death of a great chief. When Halley's comet appeared on the horizon, the chickens, goats, and sheep had a bad time of it. It was necessary to ward off all the possible misfortunes. It is true that the comet was magnificent, spreading for several days from one end of the sky nearly to another, and it is understandable that the natives should be upset. We have heard that many people were troubled in our civilized countries, where the comet could not be seen in all its splendor. In spite of all those sacrifices, the chief of one of the principal cantons in the province, the naba of Pwitenga, died that very year!

000 We must limit our enumeration, and these few examples, which could easily be multiplied, suffice to make clear the role of amulets and superstitions in the life of this people.

801 One further word on superstitions. The reader may have noticed that the numbers three and four and their composites have recurred constantly according to the sex of the person spoken of. Three is reserved for men and four for women. In the sacrifices, God-king male is called three times. God-king female four times. The cord of the charm has three or four knots according to sex; mothers mourn their children for 33 or 44 days. A dead man receives 333 or 3, 333 cowries, a dead woman 444 or 4, 444, etc.

302 Every time a native changes his status, his hair must be removed. Babies are shaved before they are given a name, girls before they come to their husband, women when they are transferred to a new

302 husband by legacy; while men are shaved only when they receive their first wife, because then they become masters of a hut, but they are not shaved when they get new wives because their status does not change again. A man who is appointed naba must lose his hair which was that of a subject and no longer suitable to a chief. A dead person [764] may only be buried without being shaved if he died an accidental death, etc.

789 The cross also plays a role which must not be overrated, but which is nevertheless real. The hilts of swords bear the shape of a cross; the feet, hands, and chest of the sick are often anointed with charcoal mixed in fat, always in the shape of a cross. The chests and backs of soukala dwellers are also marked with crosses to protect them against lightning. The huts are marked likewise, and crosses are drawn even inside the mouths of horses and donkeys. A cross is also drawn on the hut door of those who are seriously ill so as to ward off evil spirits. A cross of ashes on the chest and back is part of the mourning costume.

What is the origin of this custom? The natives cannot say, and invariably reply, "This is what our fathers did."

In addition to these superstitious practices that do not commit one to anything and that harm no one, there are others which can be very useful to /101/ those who practice them, and others yet which seem indeed to fall into the category of magic. We are referring to what the natives designate by the generic name of tim, without differentiating between true remedies of medicinal origin and superstitions or evil spells which should be characterized as magic. Indeed, it is often quite difficult to distinguish between the two.

755 Amulets and charms are tim to the natives, and so are the medicines which their specialists prescribe and which seem to have real effectiveness. We mentioned them briefly when we spoke of illness. We did not say that the preparation of these medicines rarely goes unaccompanied by some sorcery, and that the person who has been cured by a remedy must at least keep some in a little bag and sacrifice a chicken to it every year. Everything is done as in the usual sacrifices, but the invoking formula is replaced with the following: "God-tim, stretch out your hand and take this chicken. God has given me a powerful medicine. May this medicine protect me night and day, in the middle of the night and on the path, where we amuse ourselves and in the huts. Keep the jaws of the snake shut so that next year I may still be in good health, so that no misfortune may come to me,

114 distant past, since we must place Rawa, the first conqueror of
174 Ouagadougou and Ouahigouya (see further on), in the twelfth century A. D., and his parents came from Dagomba where it is clear the Mossi have lived for some time. The crossing of Haoussa and Djerma by the forefathers of the Dagomba Mossi takes us back to a period that obviously cannot be precisely established, but which is definitely earlier than the fourteenth century (when the Mossi conquered Timbuktu), and one must recognize, contrary to Captain Lambert's opinion, that the Mossi who took Timbuktu came from the south (probably from Ouahigouya) and not from the east (the Say region). We would like to point out /5/ also that they were a great deal closer to Timbuktu in Ouahigouya than in Say. Once this point has been cleared up and the ensuing mistakes corrected, the plausibility of the discovery of the road followed by the Mossi who came from Bornu (if they came from there), which was re-traced by Captain Lambert, is acceptable.

These observations also apply to the continuation of Captain Lambert's report. He says that the wars waged by the second Songhaï empire against the Mossi (sixteenth century) forced the latter to leave the Djerma country to go southwest toward Dagomba. Obviously, all of this is quite inaccurate, but, without accepting Captain Lambert's cause for the emigration and his establishing it further in the past, we can accept the route he traces.

174 "This movement," says Captain Lambert, speaking of the march from Djerma to Dagomba, "took place in a southerly direction, and the Mossi, after having followed the Niger River, crossed it at a point located between Say and Ilo, but much closer to Ilo.

[301] "North of Ilo, the custom of shaving the heads of the chieftains'
[302] wives still persists. These women also wear metal leggings (1), par-

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1. Captain Lambert undoubtedly is referring to the beautiful copper leggings, about 20 centimeters high, worn by the rich Mossi women.

ticularly characteristic of the Mossi peoples and sometimes encountered among peoples who have been in contact with them.

"From this point, the migration, leaving the Bariba country on the left (2), went in a straight line through Gourma and the Pama region

222 predominates in the bush of the territory and which, owing to its
137 abundance, lends the bush its particular character.

The karité fruit is an egg-shaped, elongated chestnut, smaller than the fruit of the European chestnut tree. It is distinguished from it even more clearly by its fleshy covering with its greenish skin. This flesh is soft, quite thick, and tastes delicious, like a very ripe, even overripe pear.

222 It is the women who gather the karité when the fruit is ripe,
252 before the rainy season, at the beginning of April. First, the flesh surrounding the chestnut is eaten /496/. Then, after breaking the brown shell, the inner part is used to make the famous karité butter.

252 As everywhere else, it is the women who do this among the Mossi. They remove the shell of the chestnut, and then mash the sticky and whitish substance which is found inside. It is pounded on crushing stones with a little wooden pestle. Once this is done, the substance is cooked in a canari and then mashed again, this time in the large wooden mortars, until the paste acquires the consistency of butter. Then it is pounded once more between crushing stones. When this is over, the paste is placed in a canari with lukewarm water, and then stirred and manipulated by hand. This produces a sort of dirty-white cream, somewhat similar to beaten egg whites, but firmer. Then this cream is boiled until it changes into oil. The impurities drop to the bottom of the canari, and the oil floats. The latter is gathered, placed in a clean gourd, and allowed to cool. The result is a pale yellow butter. At first sight it looks like real butter, but when sniffed it reveals a characteristic odor which is unpleasant to Europeans.

Gourounsi women prepare karité butter in the same manner as Mossi women.

● 302 This butter is put to various uses. First of all, it is utilized for grooming purposes. The women especially rub it into their hair in copious quantities, not only among the Mossi but throughout the Sudan as well. This, naturally enough, lends them an aroma which
[388] is not very pleasant to European noses. Karité butter is also made into soap when certain ashes are added. Finally, it is used in cooking.

423 The karité trees standing in a field belong to the owner of the field. Those which stand in the bush belong to the people of the

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

595 who did live at the palace, only a small minority prepared the ruler's meals
644 and shared his bed. Dim Delobson reports that Mogho Naba Kom II (1905–42) had thirty-seven wives. His son, Mogho Naba Sagha II (1942–
[177] 57), had twenty.[24] The present Mogho Naba, Kougri, recently married
[178] according to Western tradition and is officially monogamous.[25] There seems to be a general trend toward fewer wives among Mossi chiefs.

643 Mossi rulers never married for the purpose of forming state alliances,
581 and their marriages had no political significance. The Mogho Naba's mar-
582 riages were exogamous with regard to the royal lineage and to his mother's minimal lineage. Aside from these restrictions, however, the Mogho Naba could marry women from any Mossi lineage or group, including serfs, slaves, and foreign populations. It is said that when Mogho Naba Sanum (1850–90) despaired of having an heir by a Mossi woman, he took a Fulani wife.[26]

643 The Mogho Naba had no formal wedding ceremony. The task of intro-
585 ducing a new wife to the royal harem fell to the Pughtiema. She and her
[302] assistants welcomed the wife in a prescribed fashion. First they shaved all the hair from her body. They then bathed her in warm water to which shea butter and ritual herbs had been added, and during the bath they recited the ruler's genealogy to impress her with her new status.[27] The Pughtiema advised her on the need for proper deportment, and warned her that
[301] adultery was punished by death. To close the ceremony, a smith fastened to the girl's wrists and ankles the silver or brass bracelets that identified her as a wife of the Mogho Naba. If the bride was still a child, she was often allowed to return to her father's house until she reached childbearing age. If she was past the age of puberty, her marriage was consummated without further ceremony, and she joined the ranks of the ruler's wives.

644 The wives who lived in the palace were divided into three groups. The
595 first group included the wives who lived with the Pughtiema in a section of the palace harem called the *zaka sanga* ("large courtyard"). These women were all past childbearing age and no longer received nocturnal visits from the Mogho Naba. They had their own fields in the vicinity of the palace and cultivated them with the aid of the samande-kamba, the pages they had adopted, and their own children. The women of the second group, those of the *zagbilin* ("small courtyard"), were mostly in their thirties or forties and still sexually active. They received occasional visits from the Mogho Naba, but fewer than his younger wives. These women also cultivated their fields with the help of the young men of the court.

The third group of wives, the *dogunba* ("keepers of the household"), was the most important. The dogunba prepared the ruler's meals and satis-

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

It was only when this man had returned to the capital that all the nobles in the local ruling lineage were invited to Ouagadougou to press their claims. Only the dead chief's babissi went to Ouagadougou, even though all nobles subscribed to the traditional concept that "the nam does not belong to any one sub-lineage; it can be given to any nobleman." Unlike the others, these nobles did not shave their heads in mourning, thus indicating their candidacy for the nam. When they donned sheepskin cloaks and carried spears on their shoulders, they indicated that they were interested in the nam of the district.

Before a candidate for the district chieftainship left for Ouagadougou, he collected livestock, money, clothing, and grain from his friends to give as gifts or bribes to important officials in the capital. When he arrived there, he lived with friends and conducted his campaign from their home. He and the other candidates visited their provincial minister and his colleagues, the Mogho Naba, and other courtiers, giving presents ostensibly as a sign of friendship but actually with the ultimate aim of impressing these people with their generosity. These activities were often very costly; for if the Ouagadougou officials suspected that the candidates were wealthy, they made every effort to obtain as many presents as possible. It was not unusual for candidates for the district chieftainship to remain at the capital as long as "thirty-three" or "sixty-six" days before the officials were satisfied with their generosity and made preparations for the election.

The evening before the election, the Baloum Naba asked each candidate to provide a chicken and a sheep for the evening sacrifices to the namtibo.[88] After the morning ceremony on the following day, the Ouidi Naba reminded the sovereign that a new chief had to be chosen for Nobere district. The Mogho Naba summoned the Gounga Naba and asked him which candidate had the best character and was most capable of taking care of the district—a question which shows that the Mossi never placed primogeniture above the ability to rule.[89] The Gounga Naba had already consulted his friends about the matter, but he recounted both the good and the bad qualities of each candidate. At the same time, he hinted which one would make the best chief. He finally told the Mogho Naba that all of the candidates were worthy men, adding, "You can give the nam to any of them." The Mogho Naba then looked around to ascertain whether the other ministers had concurred in the Gounga Naba's implied choice before declaring, "I will give the nam to X, because when his [father, grandfather, or brother, used in the generic or classificatory sense] was alive, he was good to me. The ancestors would be angry if I did not give his [son, grandson, or brother] the nam." With these words the selection was made, and the ministers now prepared to install the successful candidate.

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The Mogho Naba's daughter, the Napoko, impersonates her deceased father at his funeral ceremonies. Note that she wears one of his robes, his slippers, and his bonnet, and has his sword behind her.

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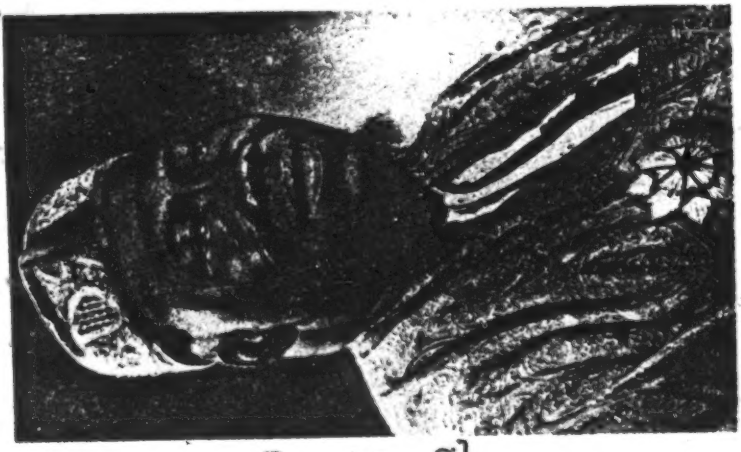

Mogho Naba Sagha II (1942-57), who was instrumental in reuniting the Mossi people into one territory, the Upper Volta.

[p. 178-8]

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

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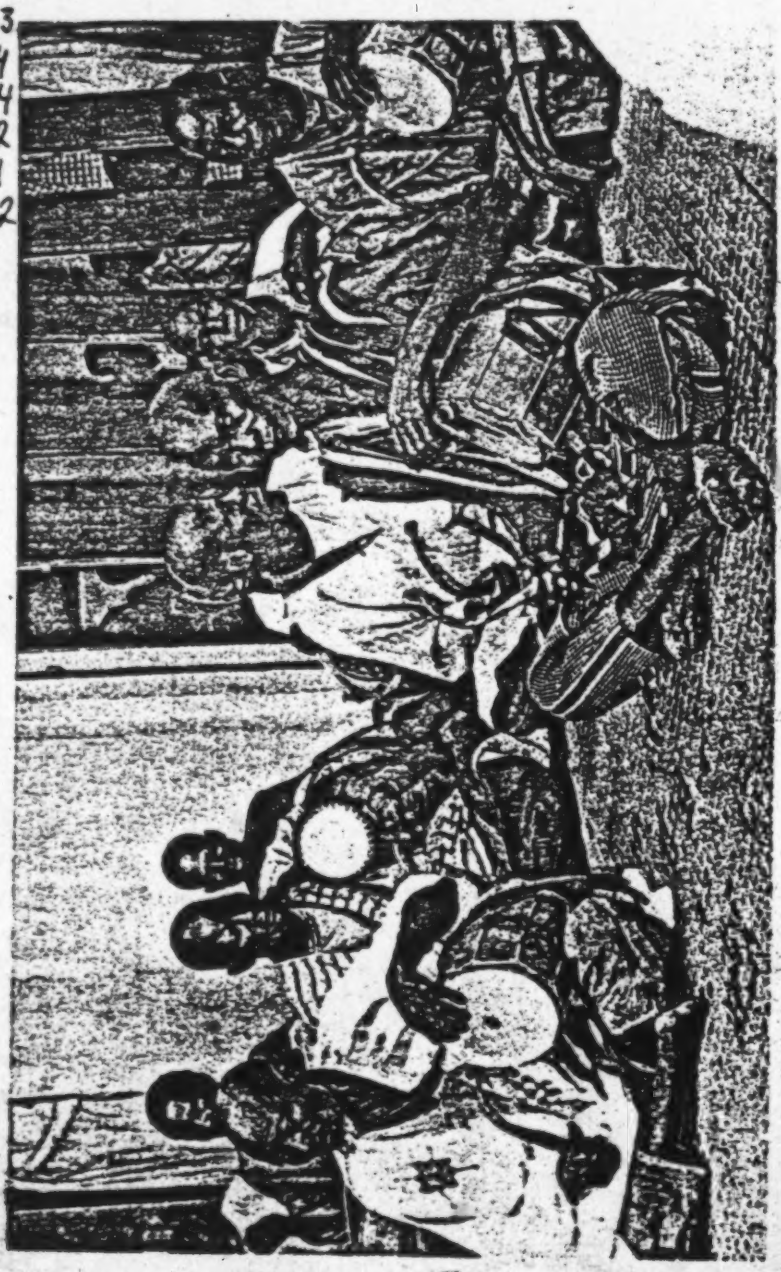

The musicians of the royal court, the Banlon.

[p. 178-C]

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[C-849 p. 179]

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(*Left*) Mogho Naba Kougri and Ouezzain Coulibaly, who became Vice President of the Government Council of the Upper Volta in 1957. (*Center*) Maurice Yaméogo, President of the Republic of Upper Volta. (*Right*) Mogho Naba Kougri (1957–) on his ceremonial horse at his installation.

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

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Mogho Naba Kougri concedes to the administration, and orders his warriors to disband.

[p. 178-H]